

Prepared Testimony of the City of New Haven, Department of Police Services
Respectfully submitted to the Transportation Committee
Public Hearing, March 3, 2010



City of New Haven
John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

Good Afternoon Honorable Members of the Transportation Committee,
Thank you for the opportunity for me to express my support for Senate Bill 345. I have twenty years experience in law enforcement, all of which in the City of New Haven. I have spent half of my career in the Traffic Enforcement Motorcycle Unit, a unit that I now command.

The issue of traffic cameras in our city, and the main premise in Senate Bill 345, will only benefit the mission of the traffic division; which is *public safety*. The City of New Haven from February 2009 to February 2010 experienced just short of seventeen hundred motor vehicle accidents; which is an extremely high number. While not all of these accidents can be attributed to red-light violations, a large percentage of these accidents are a direct result of a failure to obey overhead traffic control signals. Traffic cameras would benefit our city greatly; it would educate the public and make them aware that stopping these violations is a priority for law enforcement. This would surely rest on the mind of operators who routinely violate red over head signals. Detractors will say that they were not driving the auto at the time of the violation. With a clear photograph of make; model and registration, liability would fall on the owner of said violator vehicle whereby CGS 14-299 would be issued to the registered owner of the vehicle.

It is my opinion that a de-centralized system, not an individual police department must be created for review of violation, and issuance of infraction. Each geographical court district will entertain any grievances in terms of a not guilty plea. The system is not a perfect one. Previously registered owners are responsible for turning in marker plates prior to sale of vehicle. In cases of unregistered vehicle or misuse of marker plates previously registered owner would be contacted necessitating explanation as to why plate was not properly surrendered as dictated under CGS. This system will only act as another tool to be utilized by law enforcement; specifically at major intersections identified by the Department of Transportation as having high volume of motor vehicle collisions.

Officers alone cannot be the sole protector of each major intersection in terms of enforcement. Implementation and education of the public on traffic cameras may reap the benefit of owners becoming more responsible and accountable.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak on this bill.

Sincerely,

Sergeant John Magoveny
NHPD Traffic Division